

Three Legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous



The Three Legacies of Alcoholics Anonymous are Recovery, Unity, and Service. These legacies have been passed down to us from the cofounders and old timers of A.A.

- Recovery is contained in the Big Book and Twelve Steps.
- Unity is contained in the Twelve Traditions.
- Service is contained in every act which helps A.A. function or which carries the A.A. message to those who need it. Service is based on the Twelve Concepts

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous
Guide our actions in recovery as individuals.

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

Guide our actions as a group.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The Twelve Concepts for World Service

Guide our actions as an assembly in service.

1. The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. World services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.
2. When, in 1955, the A.A. groups confirmed the permanent charter for their General Service Conference, they thereby delegated to the Conference complete authority for the active maintenance of our world services and thereby made the Conference-excepting for any change in the Twelve Traditions or in Article 12 of the Conference Charter-the actual voice and the effective conscience for our whole Society.
3. As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the groups, the Conference, the A.A. General Service Board and its several service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives, and of thus insuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of world service with a traditional “Right of Decision.”
4. Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional “Right of Participation, ” taking care that each classification or group of our

world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

5. Throughout our world service structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, thus assuring us that minority opinion will be heard and that petitions for the redress of personal grievances will be carefully considered.
6. On behalf of A.A. as a whole, our General Service Conference has the principal responsibility for the maintenance of our world services, and it traditionally has the final decision respecting large matters of general policy and finance. But the Conference also recognizes that the chief initiative and the active responsibility in most of these matters should be exercised primarily by the trustee members of the Conference when they act among themselves as the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.
7. The Conference recognizes that the Charter and the Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments: that the trustees are thereby fully empowered to manage and conduct all of the world service affairs of Alcoholics Anonymous.
8. The trustees of the General Service Board act in two primary capacities: (a)With respect to the larger matters of over-all policy and finance, they and their primary committee directly manage these affairs. (B)But with respect to our separately incorporated and constantly active services, the relation of the trustees is mainly that of full stock ownership and of custodial oversight which they exercise through their ability to elect all directors of these entities.
9. Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety. The primary world service leadership once exercised by the founders of A.A. must necessarily be assumed by the trustees of the General Service Board of Alcoholics Anonymous.
10. Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority-the scope of such authority to be always well defined whether by tradition, by resolution, by specific job description, or by appropriate charters and bylaws.
11. While the trustees hold final responsibility for A.A.'s world service administration, they should always have the assurance of the best possible standing committees, corporate service directors, executives , staffs, and consultants. Therefore, the composition of these underlying committees and service boards, the personal qualifications of their members, the manner of their induction into service, the systems of their rotation, the way in which they are related to each other, the special rights and duties of their executives, staffs, and consultants, together with a proper basis for the financial compensation of these special workers, will always be matters for serious care and concern.
12. General Warranties of the Conference: In all the proceedings, the General Service Conference shall observe the spirit of the A.A. Tradition, taking great care that the Conference never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds plus an ample reserve , be its prudent financial principle; that none of the Conference members shall ever be placed in a position of unqualified authority over any of the others; that all important decisions be reached by discussion, vote, and whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that no Conference action ever be personally punitive or an incitement to public controversy; that, though the Conference may act for the service of Alcoholics Anonymous, it shall never perform any acts of government; and that, like the Society of Alcoholics Anonymous which it serves, the Conference itself will always remain democratic in thought and action.

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